

# Flexibility in the Norwegian labour market

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1. Flexible working hours
2. Flexible working places
3. Philosophy, cultural background, effects
4. Advantages and dilemmas



# 1 Flexible working hours

The employed organizes his working hours himself  
Legal right: AML § 10-2 - Working Environment Act

## Daily flexible working hours

- A fixed time daily – core hours
- normally between 9:00 am and 2:00 pm
- Starting hours: 07:00 - 09:30 am
- Leaving hours: 3:00 - 5:00 pm – common to leave later
- Lunch break: 30 minutes,  
between 11:00 am and 1:00 pm



# Working hours in total

- Weekly schedule: 37,5 or 40 hours
- Electronic registration of hours
- Flexible saving and spending of hours

System refers to professions where flexible hours is possible.

Nurses, teachers, doctors etc obviously do not have this option



## 2 Flexible working places

- Home office
- Mix home office and office
- From a café / a train / the airport
- From...





....here?

*"Always connected"*

*\*Article in Norwegian newspaper  
Aftenposten 2008 about flexible working  
places. For most people, though, this is still  
not realistic*



# 3 Philosophy, cultural background, effects

- The principle of "Freedom with responsibility"

The employed works where and when she wants – as long as she accomplishes goals and duties defined

- Based on a strong confidence in the employees
- Defined contract, mutual understanding of roles and duties strictly important for this to work out



# Freedom and flexibility... increases motivation and productivity

- Dedication and loyalty
- The employed feels appreciated and trusted
- Wants to bring results to the company or organization
- Does his job (and a lot more?)



# Freedom and flexibility ...influences personal life

- Important effect/help for the family schedule and life quality
- Example:
- Arrival 09:30, leaving 03:00  
works from 08:00-10:30 pm  
Total: 8 hours
- Time for interests and hobbies



## Freedom and flexibility.... attracts the best employees?

- Based on confidence in the employees' competence
- Highly educated employees want to form, create and influence their own working situation
  - want to be empowered and be decision makers
- Independency – a highly rated value in Norwegian labour culture

# Communication and decision making

- Culture and tradition non-authoritative
- Open, continuous dialogue between colleagues and leaders: When necessary – e.g. effective
- Decentralized power – let employees be the experts
- Leadership philosophy: The employees develop through responsibility and challenges.

Implies that it is aloud to make a mistake



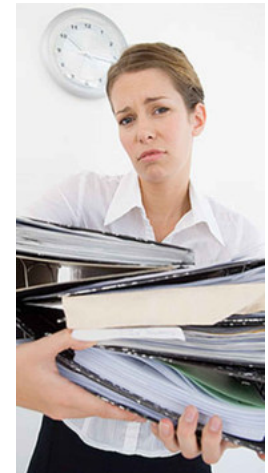
# Advantages

- *Freedom*
- Excellent results with dedicated employees
- Possibilities of developing one's ideas, interesting and attractive tasks/challenge
- Learning to look for options, good at problem solving
- Creativity, enthusiasm



# Risks

- *Responsibility*
- Requires a lot of independency, the ability of decision making – insecure persons may be uncomfortable
- When to stop?
- Risk of work overload
- Negative stress due to lack of limits



# The value of spare time...

